



MDA News Digest July 2013



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A Message from Secretary Buddy Hance

Greetings,

A reminder to farmers – contact your [local soil conservation district](#) if you plan to build or excavate on your farm to ensure you are in compliance with local laws and regulations. We have heard of some new regulatory changes where farmers may need to obtain a permit for activities that previously did not require a permit.



Secretary
Hance

Thank you to all of our farmers who have signed up and planted [cover crops](#). The wet weather has delayed the normal farming schedule, which we believe caused a last minute certification. This has resulted in a flood of paperwork for the department and there may be a slight delay in providing cover crop payments to our farmers. We will distribute checks to participating farmers as quickly as possible.

There is still time to hit the [Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail](#) to complete your [Trailblazer passport](#) and learn the importance of the dairy industry to Maryland agriculture. I just visited Bloom's Bloom Dairy in Harford County and plan to visit more farm creameries in the coming weeks.

The [State Fair](#) is just around the corner. Be sure to visit the Farm and Garden Building while you're there. We will have fun family activities and MDA experts on hand (Aug. 23-Sept. 2). See you at the Fair!

Feature Story: It's Buy Local Month!

July is Buy Local Month!

MDA always encourages Marylanders to buy local whenever possible, and in July we sponsor several events to help spread the word about the [benefits of buying local](#).

The [Buy Local Challenge](#) and Governor O'Malley's Annual [Buy Local Cookout](#) are among the highlights of the month. Also available is the [2013 Buy Local Cookout Recipe Cookbook](#), available free online.

Don't forget! All the farms and creameries on [Maryland's Best Ice Cream Trail](#) provide local products as well as a

great educational experience for folks who visit the farms. And you can find a

Farmers Market and other local products near you on our [searchable database](#) on the [Maryland's Best website](#).



Headlines from MDA

Below are some of the news release MDA recently distributed.

[Nominations for 2012 Governor's Agriculture Hall of Fame Due Sept. 5](#) (June 25) - To honor the leaders of Maryland's thriving agricultural community, MDA is accepting nominations of farmers and farm families for the Governor's Agriculture Hall of Fame, which pays tribute to those who have dedicated their lives to one of the state's leading industry. Any farm family that derives its income principally from farming is eligible for the award. [For more information.](#)

[Join Watermelon Queens on Aug. 2 at the World's Largest Crab Feast in Annapolis](#) (July 30) – MDA and the Mar-Del Watermelon Association will participate in the world's largest crab feast on Aug. 2, at the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis to highlight the economic and nutritional value of watermelon and the increasing demand for locally-grown produce. [For more information.](#)

[Maryland Farmers to Receive Additional Funds in Federal Crop Insurance Assistance](#) (July 18) Maryland farmers who signed up for an eligible crop insurance policy in 2013 will receive an additional automatic premium assistance (federal) credit of up to \$225 per policy. [For more information.](#)

[Celebrate National Farmers' Market Week in Maryland, Aug. 5 – 11](#) (July 30) Gov. O'Malley designated Aug. 5-11, Farmers' Market Week in Maryland to coincide with National Farmers' Market Week. MDA encourages citizens to celebrate the week by visiting farmers' market and buying local products. [For more information.](#)

[MDA Reports Weights and Measures Law Violations](#) (July 1) - MDA's Weights and Measures Section, which inspects and regulates devices used to determine the quantity of commodities, reported enforcement activity between March 14 and June 14. [For more information.](#)

[Invasive Kudzu Bug Found in Maryland; Soybean Growers Warned to Monitor for New](#)

[Pest](#) (July 10) - The kudzu bug, another invasive species from Asia, has been found in five Maryland counties. MDA is alerting soybean growers – especially organic soybean growers – to watch for this pest that can reduce yields but can also be controlled with appropriate pesticides. Researchers at the University of Maryland discovered the bug and confirmed its presence in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, Prince George’s and St. Mary’s counties. [For more information.](#)

[MDA Resubmits Phosphorus Management Tool with Revisions to AELR](#) (July 11) – MDA announced that proposed changes to the Maryland Phosphorus Management Tool (PMT) were submitted to the Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive, and Legislative Review (AELR) of the Maryland General Assembly on July 11. MDA petitioned the committee to request emergency status for the regulations to ensure they will be in place for the fall planting season. [For more information.](#)

[Dates for New Professional Fertilizer Applicator Certification Exam Announced](#) (July 19) – MDA has announced the first series of dates for its new Professional Fertilizer Applicator Certification Exam, which will be held in Anne Arundel, Montgomery and Talbot counties over the next two months. Beginning October 1, lawn care professionals hired to apply fertilizers to turfgrass must be certified by MDA’s Nutrient Management Program or work under the direct supervision of an individual who is certified. [For more information.](#)

[Maryland Horse Industry Board Seeks Nominations for Vacancies by Aug. 15](#) -

The Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) is seeking nominations to fill two positions on its 12-member board. The open positions represent licensed veterinary medicine (equine) and licensed stable operators. [For more information.](#)

[National Jousting Champions Receive Touch of Class Award](#) (July 22) - The four reigning national jousting champions – all from Maryland -received the Maryland Horse Industry Board’s July Touch of Class Awards. Marylanders swept all four divisions at the 2012 national jousting finals, [For more information.](#)

[Grants Available Through Maryland Horse Industry Board \(MHIB\) to Fund Equine-Related Projects](#) (July 25) - The MHIB will accept grant applications for research, educational and promotional projects that support horses or the equestrian community, or develop new opportunities for the Maryland horse industry. Grant applications may be submitted between Aug. 1 and Sept. 30. Individual requests should not exceed \$3,000. [For more information.](#)

[Read all press releases](#)

On the MDA Blog

The MDA blog contains brief stories about the more informal news around MDA. Some recent posts are shown below:

- [MDA joins with the Maryland Department of Health & Mental Hygiene to produce video](#)
- [MDA Honors Employee of the Quarter for Customer Service: Ed Payne](#)
- [MDA Honors Employee Team of the Quarter](#)
- [MDA Honors Employee of the Quarter for Innovation: Dr. Allen Ingling](#)
- [What’s Blooming Around MDA in July?](#)

[Read the Blog](#)

Facebook: What are we Talking About?

We update our [Facebook](#) page several times a week. Some recent posts are shown below.

- *Most popular post of the month* - The release of the 2013 Buy Local Recipe Cookbook
- Announcement of food safety training for cantaloupe producers & packers
- Young Farmers Tour of Southern Maryland Farms
- How to Fertilize Your Lawn Responsibly

[Like us on Facebook!](#)

MDA on the Web

The MDA website is your go-to place for the latest information about MDA. We are adding new information every week.

- We've added a new web page about the [Buy Local Challenge and Buy Local Cookout](#), which includes links to the current and past Buy Local Cookout Recipes cookbooks.
- We've added a new page with information about the new [Pesticide Information and Reporting Work Group](#), which was created by legislation earlier this year and is staffed by MDA.
- We've posted a new webpage with information about the [Agricultural Certainty Oversight Committee](#), which was created this year to help develop regulations for this new program by the end of the year.

Visit us anytime at: www.mda.maryland.gov

New on the MDA Website

During the last month, we have added several new pages to the website to help citizens understand the important work of our agency. New pages include:

- [Buy Local Cookout Page](#) - This one-stop shop provides information about the Buy Local Challenge and Buy Local Cookout, including downloads for current and past Buy Local Cookbooks.
- [Pesticide Information and Reporting Work Group](#) - MDA staffs this work group, created by the General Assembly earlier this year, and is chaired by Sen. Manno and Del. Lafferty. The group is determining what, if any, gaps exist in pesticide reporting and how best to fill them. This page contains copies of presentations, minutes, etc.
- [Agricultural Certainty Oversight Committee](#) - Lists committee members and follows the work of the committee which is developing regulations needed to implement the

Ag Certainty program – established by the General Assembly earlier this year.

- The [MDA Lawn Fertilizer webpage](#) has new information about testing dates for applicators, manuals for professionals and homeowners, and other tips for how you can maintain a healthy, environmentally responsible lawn. Our website is the go-to place for information about Maryland's Fertilizer Law, which passed in 2011 and will take full effect in October.

Visit the [MDA website](#) anytime.

Follow Us on Social Media

On Twitter: *MDA has several Twitter feeds you can follow for quick updates. We hope you'll follow us.*

- [@MdAgDept](#) - official Twitter account of the Maryland Department of Agriculture
- [@MdsBest](#) - Twitter feed for MDA's Marketing Office and the Maryland's Best Program
- [@MdEquines](#) - Twitter feed for MDA's Maryland Horse Industry Board
- [@MdFarm2School](#) - Twitter feed for MDA's Farm to School Program
- [@MDGypsyMoth](#) - Twitter feed for MDA's Forest Pest Management during gypsy moth spraying season. (It is not currently tweeting.)

On Facebook: MDA has several Facebook pages we invite you to "like."

- [MDA's Official Facebook page](#)
- [Maryland's Best Facebook page](#)
- [Maryland Farm to School Facebook page](#)
- [Maryland Young Farmers Advisory Board Facebook page](#)

MDA In Pictures

MDA's [Flickr](#) account has photos of MDA events while our [YouTube](#) playlists have videos about various agricultural topics.

New photo sets added during the last month include

- Young Farmers Advisory Board tour of Southern Maryland farms.

- What's in Bloom at MDA? Photos with info of flowers growing around MDA headquarters.
- Employees of the Quarter receive certificates from Secretary, Deputy Secretary
- Historical pictures of Century Farm families being inducted into the program.

View [MDA Flickr](#):

Upcoming Events

- [Maryland Farmers' Market Week, Aug. 5-11](#)
- [Mid-Atlantic Precision Ag Equipment Day, Aug. 7](#)
- [Maryland State Fair, Aug. 23 – Sept. 2](#)
- [Maryland Wine Festivals and Events](#)
- [Maryland Agricultural Fairs and Shows](#)

We invite your feedback

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We are always looking for ways to improve how we serve our constituents. Please send your comments, suggestions and ideas to mda.news@maryland.gov or call 410-841-5881. Or contact:

- Julie Oberg, Communications Director, 410-841-5888, julie.oberg@maryland.gov
- Vanessa Orlando, Public Information Officer, 410-841-5889 vanessa.orlando@maryland.gov

[Forward this email](#)

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